understood that the Indian Shipbuilders Association (ISBA) has represented to the Ministry of Surface Transport that subsidy should be given to the Indian Shipbuilders in order to make them level with overseas shipbuilders in international competitiveness.

The Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) is also a member of the ISBA. The representation is under examination in the Ministry of Surface Transport.

(e) A. 5.5 ton Bollard Pull Tug "Veeru" was built and exported to the Government of Maldives at a cost of US $ 1.2 million, by GSL. GSL has targetted to procure one export order during 1997-98.

Preserving INS Vikrant as a Symbol in Museum

4148. SHRI K.M. KHAN:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have been requested to preserve I.N.S. Vikrant as a symbol of partriotism and nationalism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to consider the requests made for preservation of I.N.S. Vikrant; and

(d) if so, details thereof, and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (d) A proposal has been received to convert the decommissioned ship INS Vikrant into a naval museum. Decision in this regard would depend, inter alia, on feasibility of such conversion.

Ex-officio Membership to M.Ps. and M.L.As in Cantonment Boards

4149. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been requested to give Ex-officio membership to M.Ps and M.L.As in 63 Cantonment Boards of country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any action on these requests so far, and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Requests have been received from the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Babu Rao Paranjape, M.P. and Shri Nandi Yelliah, M.P. to give ex-officio Membership to M.Ps and M.L.As. in the Cantonment Boards.

(c) and (d) It has not been found feasible to agree to the proposal, as under the existing frame-work of the Cantonment Act, 1924, there is no provision for nominating M.L.As to the Cantonment Boards.

This decision has been intimated to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and the Members of Parliament concerned.

Posting Air Attaches in Indian Diplomatic Missions

4150. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) since when have Air Attaches in the Indian diplomatic missions in Brazil, South Africa, China and Turkey have not been posted;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of diplomatic Missions abroad where the Air Attaches have not been posted and since when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) The diplomatic missions in Brazil, South Africa, China and Turkey do not have a sanctioned establishment for Air-attache.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) All established vacancies of Air-Attaches, in Indian missions abroad have been filled.

रक्षा संपदा विभाग के भूखंडों को लीज पर दिया जाना

4151. **श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) रक्षा संपदा विभाग के लीज पर दिए गए भूखंडों का ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ख) उन भूखंडों का ब्यौरा क्या है जिनका किराया प्राप्त हो चुका है तथा किराए की दर कितनी है और उन भूखंडों का ब्यौरा क्या है जिनका किराया बकाया है तथा यह कब से बकाया है;

(ग) उन भूखंडों का ब्यौरा क्या है जिनकी लीज की अवधि समाप्त हो चुकी है; और

(घ) उन भूखंडों का ब्यौरा क्या है जिन पर हुए अवैध कब्जों को हटाने की कार्रवाई की जा रही है तथा इस संबंध में क्या प्रगति हुई है?

रक्षा मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री एन०वी०एन० सोमू): (क) से (घ) सूचना एकत्रित की जा रही है तथा सभा पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Issuance of unfit Medicines by Armed Forces Medical Stores Depots

4152. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centrally purchased medicines costing Rs. 10.19 lakh which were found unfit were issued to patients prior to receipt of test reports by Armed Forces Medical Stores Depot, Lucknow and Delhi; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to avoid such instances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) The drugs and medicines are purchased by the Armed Forces Medical Services from the manufacturers registered with the Directorate General of Quality Assurance or the Directorate General of Health Services. The manufacturers are registered only after their manufacturing process is inspected and found statisfactory. The medicines purchased centrally are tested by the Quality Assurance Organisation and only after their acceptance, they are released for consumption. In certain emergent situations, the Medical Store Depots make local purchases of medicines from registered firms and accept them on the basis of their claim. However, for ample precaution, some samples are sent for post laboratory testing. The drugs purchased in such emergent situation are issued without waiting for the results of the laboratory test wherever undertaken. In majority of cases, the laboratory tests confirm the specified standards of medicines. In a small number cases the medicines are not found to satisfy all the prescribed specifications. In such cases the medicin are returned to the suppliers for replacement or for recovery of the cost of medicines. In certain cases, restrictions are also placed on future purchases from such firms.

2. During the period from December 1991 to December 1996, some medicines locally purchased by the Armed Forces Medical Store Depots, Lucknow and Delhi, were found not to conform to the specifications. Even in these cases there was only marginal thereapeutic effect of little clinical significance.

Delay in appointment of dependents of deceased defence personnel

4153. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending with Station Head Quarters, Delhi Cantt. for appointment of dependents of deceased